

Fend-Boehm, Valerie A. - EMS

From: bill arsenault [billybobmedic@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, November 26, 2006 7:27 PM
To: Barbara Wolffe; kachristensen@fs.fed.us; Jeff Hatch; Gainor, Dia - EMS; Harry Wheeler; Steve Camerota; fred alder; fred alder; Hank Walters; Ree Ella von Borstel; gphillips@hermiston.or.us
Subject: Fwd: Mutual Aid: Paramedic reciprocity

Hello everyone,

I am forwarding this email I received from the State of California EMS Bureau in regards to a concern Mr. Lipson has, (a MEDL from a CA Type I and the San Luis Obispo Fire Department) and his constant flogging of this dead horse regarding Paramedics crossing state lines. In his apparent professional opinion, he believes Paramedics that are not California State Certified and who cross state lines wither practicing or not, are felons and further more if a Paramedic administers any medication, should be arrested. In fact, he threatend to have me arrested for his very cause.

Furthermore, if any one would like to contact Jim Emerson, MEDL, Summerland Fire Department, Summerland, California, he can provide additional details regarding Mr Lipson's experience as a MEDL.

In response to Mr. Lipson, I never stated that I was a pilot project for NICC. I did however inform him with Alice Barnett, MEDL (Custer Southern Red Team) in presence that I was a trial project for the State of Idaho in licensing an individual for EMS response. Ms Gainor and I had a previous conversation that this opportunity could be a good thing as it relates to rural healthcare settings. Case in point, I was able to assist Challis Ambulance on the Potato Fire with a patient, who was local citizen, having a heart attack until Life Flight could arrive.

As you can see from the CA EMS office, I was well within my legal rights to provide ALS care and bring across the state lines equipment as requested by my resource order. Additionally, Ms. Barnett name requested me because of my experience and the sheer size of the fire and the fact that it had been split into to TWO fire IMTs' AO.

If anyone would really like additional information regarding my practicing as a Paramedic certified by the State of Idaho and licensed as an EMS agency under the name Wildland Fire Control and Rescue Services, please feel free to contact me. I will be more then happy to show all evaluations from MEDLs', Letters of Accommodations from Type I IMTs, State of Idaho EMS letter of authorization and State of Idaho requirements that I have met, have to follow, and provide them with as requested.

Additionally it concerns me that this whole situation is the pot calling the kettle black. If Ms Christensen feels I was out of line crossing state lines then I feel that the EMS sub-committee NWCG SHWT needs to truly evaluate this in further detail. I have a list of all the individuals who notified State of Idaho that they came in from other states. Many are Paramedics and EMT-Is' who I know for a fact practiced under their SWO with equipment they brought. Some of which I guarantee was not even close to State of Idaho Standards. I did this the right way through out seven different states this year and not one, I repeat, not one had any problem with me carry ALS equipment, narcotics, defibrillator, oxygen, IV equipment, and so forth, providing I completed the NWCG Limited Reconition Form, faxed in a copy of my certification, State of Idaho EMS Agency Licensure, and a letter from my medical director. With all this being said, I had numerous EMS offices thank me for being very through and providing

them with the documentation they felt was needed to cover them.

In fact, I was the only one on the Bull Complex Wildfire (Dixie National Forest, Martin's Type I IMT, and Kim was the one who requested me specifically) that was able to care for a heart attack patient some 30 miles from the closest hospital because I carried this equipment.

Now we can get a handle on this by setting some firm standards or we can let this get out of control. I have offered my technical expertise and past experiences to her (Ms. Christensen) previously and had little to no further contact. Jeff Hatch, a MEDL and good friend of mine, has discussed this with me in great lengths and he and I were under the impression that there was going to be a fall meeting for the EMS committee. He wanted my attendance so that I might bring to light some of the issues from all this. Jeff and I email regularly and the last email I got from him he had still not heard about any meeting.

Another problem that lies here is that in ROSS (Resource Ordering System and Status), many of the technical glitches still have not been worked out from an outsider looking in. There are not a lot of truly qualified Paramedics who have all their own equipment that meets some sort of standard. Along with that when a MEDL requests EMTs or Paramedics from ordering, they often are given locals who have little to no experience on the fireline, are not IQCS qualified, and are not familiar with the Wildland Fire Operational Objectives. They believe they are there to just hang out in camp and make a few thousand dollars a day. They often are not even required to be tested through the Work Capacity Test. The MEDLs I have worked with in the past know my experience level, have seen me on multiple fires in the last 13 years, and have no problem ordering what is best for the overall situation. Not what is best for the cost-containment factor. Can you really put a price on a human life? Can you honestly answer a family member when they asked if you could have done more?

Paul Broyles, Rod Bloms, Gene Madden, Alice Barnett, Glen Phillips, Kone Hancock, and on and on and I have discussed this all in great length. I had even mentioned putting a proposal together for NIFC under any agency willing to set a position up for it to set and write standards, guidelines, make mutual aid agreements with states, and even create a viable NWCG task book for fireline EMT. Did you know that most new fireline EMTs have no idea how to operate a King radio, talk to aircraft for medical emergencies, develop a plan of action for disease containment, or even know how to take care of their own basic logistical needs once they arrive? Whose fault is this? 130/190 does not cover all this. So in the end, who are we really setting up for failure here? Besides the EMT, we are also setting up the injured Firefighter, the IC and his/her IMT, and other parties directly and indirectly involved up for catastrophic failure. I don't think this is what the USFS and DOI really want.

I do know that on December 8, 2006, the Idaho EMS Bureau is having a meeting regarding Wildland Fire EMS practices. I have been asked to attend by my regional representative, Todd McDowell (prior to his resigning) to provide insight to the common misconceptions and problems out there to the board.

I am the first one in the state to do this and the last comments he shared with me were something to the effect, "good job out there and I believe you have set the standard for others".

So if someone would be happy to forward this to Mr Lipson, I would be appreciative of this.

I do apologize for the great length of this email. But this is a passion of mine and I also believe that anyone out there fighting fires deserves the very best we can offer them.

Sincerely,

11/28/2006

Bill Arsenault

Note: forwarded message attached.

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